

NSC BRIEFING

4 February 1954

PROBLEM OF VIETNAMESE SUPPORT FOR THE WAR

I. Viet Minh controls villagers.

- A. Value in terms men, supply, intelligence.
- B. Increase of Viet Minh-controlled villages in Delta.

II. Reasons for Viet Minh success.

- A. Headstart during Japanese occupation.
- B. Viet Minh looks more indigenous than French-sponsored Bao Dai government.
- C. Better psycho war than French.
- D. Discipline toward civilians better than that of French and Viet troops.

*Also Viet Nam dynamism - Also
real leader - Viet Minh have popular*

SECRET

III. Noncooperation of intellectuals.

A. "Fence-sitters" withhold support.

1. Hedging against Viet Minh victory.
2. No confidence in Bao Dai -- too much French influence.

→ B. Answer is political revolution and all-out propaganda.

IV. Viet army depends on political progress.

A. Navarre needs big Viet army.

B. But Viet troops shy of battle.

1. No political incentive.
2. Poor morale training program.

3. Too many "missing."

C. Problem of officer shortage.

1. French don't push training.
2. Viets resent French control.
3. U.S. advice unwelcome

to French.

SECRET

CBS Broadcast 0800 47b

CPYRGHT

Word received within the hour indicates that the Indochina situation is rapidly getting worse. It is causing so much concern to our own government that President Eisenhower is understood to have set up a special committee to report on the Indochina problem. According to the news just in from the fighting fronts Communist Viet Minh rebels have forced French troops back to the first line of defense only 50 miles northwest from Luang Prabang, the royal capital of Laos. Simultaneously, they have launched a new attack in northern Laos apparently in hopes of capturing both capitals of the northwest Indochinese kingdom. Numerous clashes were reported on other Indochinese battlefronts during the day and there were reports of widespread treason and desertion among defending forces in southern Indochina. The French authorities raising a news blackout on the progress of the Luang Prabang offensive announced that the Reds have now captured important outposts on the road to the royal capital. At the same time military sources at Hanoi say that a new Communist offensive is developing in the vicinity of Paksane, near the administrative capital of Laos.

Page

Viet Minh have made point
of attacking Point 4
model villages in
Delta

US 15 handicapped
by French suspicion

There are 2 religious fighting
groups in North China -
a mixture of Catholics & Buddhists
who base their appeal on
religious-nationalist
appeals -

Names - Cao Dai -

HOA HAO -

French dislike - too unruly
against French

There are $1\frac{1}{2}$ million
Catholics- these include the
Protestants in Vietnam -
these are the Catholics
(Buddhists in minority
in Vietnam - are in Laos
& Cambodia